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ABSTRACT

This collection of abstracts is part of a continuing series providing information on recent doctoral dissertations. The 11 titles deal with the following topics: the use of audiovisual media in teaching composition; the historical development of the Conference on College Composition and Communication; collaborative methods for teaching college freshmen in remedial writing classes; Project WRITE, a Title III funded individualized writing project in San Diego high schools; writing as a composing process; the ways in which Hughes Mearns, Martha Peck Porter, Alvina Treut Burrows, and Flora Arnstein developed creative writing programs during the progressive era; a comparison of an investigator-developed and a commercially published writing curriculum designed to increase elaborating skills; content area writing in Florida high schools; methods for teaching formal English writing; a multi-cultural approach to teaching college composition; and the effects of sentence combining practice for students in remedial college English classes. (GW)

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Abstracts of the following dissertations are included in this collection:

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EFFECTIVE WRITING IN THE ENGLISH CLASSROOM VIS-A-VIS INSTRUCTIONAL MEDIA

Bird, Nancy Kenney

THE CONFERENCE ON COLLEGE COMPOSITION AND COMMUNICATION: A HISTORICAL STUDY OF ITS CONTINUING EDUCATION AND PROFESSIONALIZATION ACTIVITIES, 1949-1975

Clifford, John Patrick

AN EXPERIMENTAL INQUIRY INTO THE EFFECTIVENESS OF COLLABORATIVE LEARNING AS A METHOD FOR IMPROVING THE EXPERIENTIAL WRITING PERFORMANCE OF COLLEGE FRESHMEN IN A REMEDIAL WRITING CLASS

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DEVELOPING ELABORATING SKILLS IN WRITING BASED ON THEORIES OF LANGUAGE AND LEARNING

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UNMELTED COMPOSITION: A MULTI-CULTURAL APPROACH TO TEACHING ENGLISH COMPOSITION AT THE COLLEGE LEVEL IN AN URBAN SETTING

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AN EXPERIMENTAL STUDY OF SENTENCE-COMBINING AS A MEANS OF INCREASING SYNTACTIC MATURITY AND WRITING QUALITY IN THE COMPOSITIONS OF COLLEGE-AGE STUDENTS ENROLLED IN REMEDIAL ENGLISH CLASSES

EFFECTIVE WRITING IN THE ENGLISH CLASSROOM VIS-A-VIS INSTRUCTIONAL MEDIA Order No. 7804622

BINGHAM, Herman Lamar, A.D. The University of Michigan, 1977. 133pp. Chairman: William Alexander

The purpose of this study is to provide teachers with a plausible rationale for the use of media in the classroom and with a set of procedures which will best facilitate that use in the teaching of English, especially the composition course. The problem, as I perceive it, is that as young children we possess a creative outlook--a sense of wonder and openness. But, with the passing of time and the repetition of experience and social pressure, they find themselves trapped in a prescribed cement mold and unable to break away, at a loss to make discovery. Such has been the plight of the traditional classroom. However, I contend that the visual and aural stimulation experienced when one is involved in media can be most useful in the motivation of writing within the classroom. This is especially true when students are allowed to pursue topics of interest which will in some way satisfy their existential needs to find an identity, and to interact with others.

The study is divided into four major areas of concentration. The first area focuses on the significance of the mediated environment in the English classroom and includes a basic explanation of perception and its role in our lives, the concept of visual and aural literacy, the roles of media, and media characteristics and capabilities. The second area of concentration is the role of the media-oriented teacher and the numerous components involved in designing the mediated classroom. The third area includes an explanation of the nature and function of three specific mediums: TV, film, and popular music. Furthermore, in each case, a defense is presented on behalf of the use of the three mediums, their advantages and disadvantages are enumerated, and, most importantly, teaching strategies are suggested for effective implementation. The fourth area is devoted to a detailed account of the mediated composition syllabus employed in the classroom. Included in this account are an explanation of the types of students encountered, some of the major problems which arose in attempting to put the project into effect, models of both the traditional and mediated class syllabi for a beginning English composition class, and a brief explanation of the outcomes. The study closes with a summation of the support provided for media and concentrates on the overwhelming status and influence of media in our society. In addition, the concept of the split brain is briefly explored to suggest that the traditional teacher is guilty of a gross neglect of the creative and visual side – a most important side in a contemporary world.

THE CONFERENCE ON COLLEGE COMPOSITION AND COMMUNICATION: A HISTORICAL STUDY OF ITS CONTINUING EDUCATION AND PROFESSIONALIZATION ACTIVITIES, 1949–1975 Order No. 7808114

BIRD, Nancy Kenney, Ed.D. Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University, 1977. 250pp.

The purpose of this study was to investigate the development of the Conference on College Composition and Communication from 1949 through 1975 as a vehicle for the continuing professional education of its members and for the professionalization of the field of college composition teaching. A number of research questions were formulated to guide the investigation. These questions concerned (1) the circumstances under which the organization was founded, (2) its responses to educational movements and social forces, (3) its developing conception of its continuing education function, (4) its conception of and efforts toward professionalization, and (5) its relationship with its parent, the National Council of Teachers of English.

The chief sources of information for this study included College Composition and Communication, the official journal of the organization; the programs for the annual conferences; correspondence, minutes, and reports housed in the headquarters of of the National Council of Teachers of English in Urbana, Illinois; and a series of interviews with former officers of CCCC conducted in person, by telephone, and through the mail. In addition, some former officers lent materials from their personal files.

Using the historical method, the study identified four distinct periods in the history of the organization: 1949–1954, during which the members came together to seek a new professional identity and to found a new organization; 1955–1958, which was characterized primarily by phenomenal growth in membership and expansion of activities; 1959–1967, during which CCCC conducted an inward search for new directions and emerged as a more mature and confident organization; and 1968–1975, a period in which CCCC's activities were marked particularly by a greatly increased concern for social justice.

The researcher concluded that CCCC had become the major national forum for the continuing education of college composition teachers. It played a vital role in this process, primarily through its annual conferences and its quarterly journal. The format of the earliest conferences emphasized the workshop/discussion method. However, as the size of the meetings and the body of knowledge about the discipline of writing grew, conference topics evolved from general discussions of problems to the dissemination of more specialized research and theory depending on the leadership of a few persons. The journal evolved from little more than a pamphlet, printing reports of the conference sessions and a few articles on what specific colleges were doing in their freshman writing programs, to a widely recognized professional journal which has provided the major outlet for important research and theory development of many of the outstanding language scholars in the country.

In addition, the organization also did much to further the professionalization of college composition teaching, particularly in the areas of developing a knowledge base for the profession, developing skills in applying that knowledge, and strengthening the control of composition teachers over the practice of their own profession. It was also observed, however, that the professionalization process might be speeded if CCCC could encourage more research in the teaching of composition, exert more control over access to the profession, and establish a code of ethics for the practice of the profession. It was further suggested that some of the actions resulting from the organization's overwhelming concern for social justice during the late 1960's and early 1970's might have weakened the effects of its other efforts to professionalize the field of college composition teaching.

AN EXPERIMENTAL INQUIRY INTO THE EFFECTIVENESS OF COLLABORATIVE LEARNING AS A METHOD FOR IMPROVING THE EXPERIENTIAL WRITING PERFORMANCE OF COLLEGE FRESHMEN IN A REMEDIAL WRITING CLASS Order No. 7808455

CLIFFORD, John Patrick, Ph.D. New York University, 1977. 313pp. Chairperson: Professor Roger Cayer

The purpose of this experimental inquiry was to test the effectiveness of two methods of teaching writing to college freshmen in a remedial composition class. The traditional approach used direct teaching, texts, linear seating, teacher evaluation, and centralization of authority.

The collaborative approach, based on Edwin Mason's Collaborative Learning and the insights of John Dewey, Carl Rogers, Kenneth Bruffee, James Moffett and Peter Elbow, required students to sit in small, cooperating groups to read and evaluate copies of their writing. Students shared authority with the instructor, especially in evaluating assignments, but also in assigning final grades. Instructors were model writers and learners, facilitators and resources. There was no preteaching; the feedback that students received on their drafts was seen as significant learning, since motivation and awareness help students make needed changes in language and form.

In collaborative classes, students wrote freely for fifteen minutes on assigned autobiographical, expressive and expository topics and then sat in small circles to read and comment on their first drafts. Revisions were then written, and five copies were brought to class for more specific collaborative feedback.

This experimental inquiry was conducted at Queens College of the City University of New York in the Fall, 1975. A pretest-posttest control group design was used. Instructional treatment was the independent variable and experiential writing performance was the dependent variable along with mechanical performance, vocabulary and mechanical knowledge. Students, chosen because they received a raw score below 50 on the vocabulary and mechanics subtests of the Cooperative English Tests, Form 1A, were systematically selected and randomly assigned to six treatment classes (N = 92). Three instructors each taught a collaborative and a traditional class. A writing sample yielded scores that were a measure of experiential writing performance and mechanical performance; the Cooperative English Tests, Form 1A and 1B was used to obtain scores that measured the students' mechanical knowledge and vocabulary knowledge. A holistic rating system of from 1 to 8 was used for the writing sample. Appropriate training was provided for the essay raters and for the counters who determined the average number of errors per hundred words on the writing sample. Detailed syllabi, video tapings and discussions were employed.

Using a 2 X 3 factorial analysis of covariance, the first hypothesis was substantiated: the collaborative learning method was more effective than the traditional method in improving the experiential writing performance of college freshmen in a remedial writing class.

The second hypothesis was not upheld; both treatments were equally successful in reducing the mean number of errors on the writing sample. Additionally, the third and fourth hypotheses were not upheld: the collaborative method was not found to significantly increase either vocabulary or mechanical knowledge. The covariance procedure revealed a significant interaction between instructor and treatment for both these hypotheses. A significant instructor effect was also present in the vocabulary hypothesis.

Since students in the collaborative classes were able to effectively assume more responsibility and authority, introducing small collaborative techniques such as peer evaluation and structured feedback into regular classroom procedures was recommended as a realistic way for students to participate meaningfully in their own learning. If instructors see their role in the composition class from a more collaborative perspective, the teaching and learning of writing might become more humanistic and more effective.

Research into various components of the collaborative method are recommended. Among these are needed explorations on free writing as a heuristic, and inquiries into journal writing, feedback and assignment sequence. Inquiries studying possible connections between style and method of instruction are also recommended.

PROJECT WRITE AND ITS EFFECT ON THE WRITING OF HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS Order No. 7807195

GAUNTLETT, James Fredrick, Ed.D. Northern Arizona University, 1978. 187pp. Adviser: Dr. Robert Boothe

Project WRITE (Writing Requires Individualized Teaching of English) was an NDEA Title III funded project in the San Diego Unified School District during the 1976–77 school year. To help implement this teaching strategy with a goal to improve the writing of high school students, the $40,000.00 project provided teachers with a variety of furniture, equipment, and books in the classroom. Achievement of the goal was sought through a workshop teaching environment incorporating personal goal setting, and the encouragement of peer and individualized instruction and evaluation.

A study was made of the effect of Project WRITE instruction on the writing performance of students during the first semester of the 1976–77 school year. Twenty English classes in fifteen high schools involving 420 students were in the experimental sample. A control group of similar size and type classes was established.

The study was a quasi-experimental design in which students wrote a composition at the beginning of the semester, were exposed to the Project WRITE treatment during the semester, and then wrote on the same subject at the end of the semester. The dependent variable was the students' writing performance as measured by the scores on the pre and post writing samples. Independent variables of treatment, sex, language ability level, grade level, class size, and essay topic were analyzed. Compositions on one of three topics were evaluated on a nine-point holistic composition scale and a five-point mechanics scale. The evaluation of writing samples was controlled with thorough and sound research procedures. Raters were trained in the scoring process and rated all the writing samples at one location during one day. Papers were devoid of any identifying characteristics except for an alpha-numeric code known only to the investigator. Each composition was scored by two raters; a third rater was enlisted whenever the scores varied more than two points. Interrater reliability was high. Coefficients were calculated for fourteen variable groups, and most measured .80 or above. The Spearman Brown, or split-half, formula was applied to determine the reliability of the composition test. The reliability coefficient was .78.

Conclusions of the study were: 1. Performance of Project WRITE students was significantly greater than control group students at the .08 level of confidence when the two groups were compared by a regression equation on post-essay scores after initial differences were statistically brought into equivalence. Verification of the outperformance of the control groups by the experimental group was depicted by several indices: raw score post-essay means, adjusted post-essay mean scores, and mean change scores. 2. Project WRITE had a positive effect on male students; i.e., the male students in Project WRITE significantly outperformed the male students in the control group and also outperformed the female students in Project WRITE. A caution in this conclusion was noted, however, in that the high-ability male students in the control group had scores distributed more broadly in comparison to the eight other variable groups. 3. For all of the students not enrolled in Project WRITE, females outperformed the males. 4. Female students performed as well in the control group as they did in Project WRITE. 5. The variables of language ability, class size, grade level, and choice of composition topic, when judged on post-essay scores, had no statistical significance in the relationship to enrollment in or out of Project WRITE.

The study established the viability of Project WRITE as an effective teaching strategy. As such, it is recommended that English teachers, department chairpeople, English supervisors, and administrators consider the adoption of the techniques described. Those who are concerned with the lack of writing achievement of male high school students may wish particularly to implement a teaching strategy similar to that in Project WRITE.

THE COMPOSING PROCESS AND THE TEACHING OF WRITING: A STUDY OF AN IDEA AND ITS USES
Order No. 7805271

GUNDLACH, Robert A., Ph.D. Northwestern University, 1977. 214pp. Adviser: Wallace W. Douglas

This is a study of the idea of writing as a composing process, and an exploration of the uses of that idea in composition research and teaching. Chapter One introduces the study by establishing the premise that the variability of the composing process, influenced in a given case by the individual writer's task, purpose, situation, and working style, calls into question research which aims to discover a universal set of composing procedures that can be said to characterize the activity of writing. Rather, this chapter suggests, the purpose of research in composing ought to be to study how particular people write in specific situations, with such inquiry informed by the idea that writing is a process of composition.

Chapters Two, Three, and Four explore the basic methods of studying how people write. Chapter Two points up the possibilities and limitations of the direct observation of writers at work. Direct observation has been the principal method of inquiry in recent case studies of students' composing processes; therefore, this chapter takes the form of a critical review of three representative studies, with a concluding general discussion of direct observation as a method of studying the composing process. Chapter Three considers writers' accounts of their own practices as data for studying the composing process. Through analyses of published accounts by professional writers and of original data from children, adolescents, and college students, this chapter suggests that writers' accounts may be most profitably studied for what they reveal about a writer's attitudes toward, and feelings during, phases of the composing process, and about a writer's larger conceptions of the whole of the activity of writing. Chapter Four examines the documentary evidence of the composing process: the notes and scratched-over drafts that usually wind up in the writer's wastebasket. Examining case histories of several non-fiction articles by professional writers and course papers by two college students, this chapter presents analyses of the least-studied, yet perhaps richest, kind of information about the process of composition.

Chapters Five and Six turn to the pedagogical uses of the idea of writing as a composing process. Chapter Five evaluates the contrasting presentations of the composing process in two popular composition textbooks. Chapter Six describes approaches to incorporating the idea of writing as a composing process into the interactions between composition teachers and their students, and into a composition tutoring program.

CREATIVE WRITING IN THE PROGRESSIVE ERA: A STUDY OF HUGHES MEARNS, MARTHA PECK PORTER, ALVINA TREUT BURROWS AND COLLEAGUES, AND FLORA ARNSTEIN
Order No. 7805277

HEBERT, Joy Marie, Ph.D. Northwestern University, 1977. 143pp. Director: Wallace W. Douglas

This study deals with the ways in which several well-known teachers developed creative writing programs for their students during the progressive era. Each teacher documented his or her work in one or more books or articles, and each described a program that was considered exemplary by self and colleagues. The study examines the apparent assumptions of these teachers about children, writing, teaching, and education as revealed in their descriptions of their work.

Hughes Mearns sought to free students' creative expression by creating an atmosphere in which they could write, and he searched for evidence of literary excellence in the writing done by them. Martha Porter wanted children to be able to write in a clear and straightforward manner, to make sense of facts in their writing about them. Alvina Burrows and her colleagues acknowledged a basic antagonism between functionally accurate and creative writing, and they created two separate writing programs to accommodate what they could not reconcile. Flora Arnstein wanted children to be familiar with good poetry, to write poetry themselves, and to develop literary standards for evaluating poetry read.

Each teacher sought to develop a program for creative writing; each was strongly influenced by teacherly attitudes and the prevailing curricula to include instruction in functional language skills and in literary standards.

DEVELOPING ELABORATING SKILLS IN WRITING BASED ON THEORIES OF LANGUAGE AND LEARNING
Order No. 7809007

KUNTZ, Elaine M., Ph.D. Fordham University, 1978. 331pp. Mentor: Rita S. Brause

The purpose of the present study was to compare the effectiveness of an investigator-developed writing curriculum with one commercially published, both of which were designed to increase elaborating skills of high school students. A Scale for Scoring Written Composition which included six dependent variables, namely, total number of words, number of T-units, mean length of T-units, number of T-units in restricted code, in restricted-elaborated code, and in elaborated code was developed to assess the effects of the two treatments. The following hypotheses were explored: On the six dependent variables of the Scale for Scoring Written Composition: (1) There will be no significant difference between posttest scores in the investigator-prepared curriculum treatment group (T_1) and the commercially published treatment group (T_2); (2) There will be no significant interaction between sex and type of treatment group; (3) There will be no significant interaction between school (age, class grouping, ability) and type of treatment.

The subjects in the study were 70 tenth-grade students enrolled in four English classes in two urban senior high schools. Placement in one of the two treatment groups took place through random selection of extant participating classes within each school. Two diverse groups of subjects participated in the study: School One comprised students of a (reading level based) homogenous (high) ability group, with a mean reading level of 11.3, whose mean age was 15. School Two students were heterogenously grouped; reading levels ranged from 4.4 to 11.3 (mean 7.3); their mean age was 17. The same English teacher in each school, taught each of the two treatment groups in his/her school.

The T_1 curriculum, designed to increase written elaborating skills, contained hierarchically-structured instructional units using student identification and interpretation of nonverbal communication. It was based on Gagné's (1977, 1970) learning theory and incorporated Bernstein's (1975, 1971) language code theory.

Goals of the T_1 and T_2 curricula were deemed comparable. Literary models were used to develop elaborating skills in the T_2 curriculum. The T_1 curriculum was hierarchically-structured; the T_2 curriculum did not identify an hierarchically-structured format.

Two posters, with instructions for use, were given to teachers: one to elicit pretest compositions, the other to elicit posttest compositions.

Comparison of the effectiveness of the two treatments was ascertained by computing a one-way analysis of covariance. No significant differences were found on total number of words, number of T-units, and mean length of T-units. Significant differences between treatment groups were: (1) the T_1 group wrote a significantly smaller number of T-units in restricted code than the T_2 group; (2) A significantly larger number of T-units were written in restricted-elaborated code and in elaborated code by the T_1 group than by the T_2 group.

A two-way analysis of covariance was computed to determine the main effects of sex, treatment, and their interactions. Significant interaction was found only for variable one, total number of words. T_1 females wrote significantly more than females in the T_2 group. Females in both groups wrote more than males in both groups.

Females in both treatment groups wrote a significantly greater number of T-units than did males. No significant interaction was found on the variables analyzing number of T-units, mean length of T-units, number of T-units in restricted code, restricted-elaborated code, and elaborated code.

A two-way analysis of covariance was computed to determine the main effects of school, treatment, and these interactions. School One students, in both treatment groups, wrote significantly more words, a greater number of T-units, longer T-units, and more T-units in restricted and in elaborated code. No significant differences were found on the variable analyzing number of T-units in restricted-elaborated code. There was no significant interaction between school and treatment on any of the six dependent variables of the Scale for Scoring Written Composition.

A three-stage hierarchy in the development of elaborating skills was hypothesized as one interpretation of the finding that a significantly larger number of T-units were written in restricted-elaborated code by males and females in the T_1 group in both schools.

Results of the study indicated that elaborating skills can be increased without changing quantity of writing.

Another conclusion was that the investigator-developed hierarchically-structured curriculum, which developed elaborating skills through an understanding of nonverbal communication, is appropriate for increasing elaborating skills with students considered of high or low ability, whether homogenously or heterogenously grouped, and whether constituting a younger or older group for their grade.

WRITING IN THE CONTENT AREAS: A SURVEY OF THE INSTRUCTIONAL USES OF WRITING IN SELECTED CENTRAL FLORIDA HIGH SCHOOLS Order No. 7807097

McGEE, Nancy Rasco, Ed.D. Florida Atlantic University, 1977. 129pp.

Purpose: The purpose of this study was to describe the ways in which secondary English, mathematics, science and social studies teachers utilize writing as an instructional methodology.

Procedures: Data were collected in four steps: 1. Questionnaires were distributed to all content area teachers in the four fields in 13 Central Florida high schools in a replication of Dan Donlan's 1974 study, Teaching Writing in the Content Areas: Eleven Hypotheses from a Teacher Survey. 2. Twenty teachers, five from each content area representing schools of the questionnaire survey, were randomly selected and interviewed. Subjects were asked to supply evaluative data concerning writing practices in their content areas. 3. One class of students in each of the schools was given a questionnaire designed to parallel certain key items on the teacher survey, to identify specific forms in which students had written, and to elicit an attitudinal response to writing as a learning strategy. 4. Nineteen recent graduates of the schools in the study were interviewed to obtain evaluative data concerning writing practices in those schools during their high school careers.

Results: A 54 percent return of teacher questionnaires supported the findings of the Donlan study: Teachers preferred short writing assignments, favored exposition and reporting forms, and evaluated writing on a combined basis of form and content. Sixty-four percent made no more than 12 writing assignments per year.

Results of the teacher interviews revealed that teachers considered the ability to write to be important in all content areas, expected students to utilize notetaking skills, valued "creative" content-oriented writing, and felt that more writing should be required.

Analysis of the 446 student surveys and the interviews with recent graduates revealed that writing techniques such as outlining, rewriting, and revision were seldom used. Notetaking was the writing task most utilized with its relation to testing being the strongest motivation. Students also perceived long writing assignments as being of most value. Students identified writing instruction with English classes and would like future writing instruction in specific forms for the purpose of improving writing quality.

Conclusions: Some conclusions were: 1. Although they consider writing important to success in their disciplines, high school teachers in the four major content areas do not frequently assign writing as an instructional activity. 2. Assigned writing is brief and consists primarily of exposition and reporting given for the purpose of extending and/or expanding in-class activities. 3. Writing instruction is done through in-class supervision of the writing process, but outlining, revision/rewriting, and correcting errors are seldom used as teaching techniques. 4. Teachers are concerned with content more than form in commenting on student writing and in evaluating that writing. 5. The teaching of writing is seen primarily as the responsibility of the English teacher by both teachers and students. 6. Note-taking is the most widespread nonassigned writing task in the high school content areas as reported by both teachers and students. 7. High school students want to learn to write and associate their need for writing instruction with specific forms and improved communication.

Recommendations: Some recommendations were: 1. A certification component of instruction in teaching writing in the content areas should be required of all preservice and inservice teachers similar to the present State of Florida requirement for reading in the content areas. 2. Colleges of Education and University Departments of English should assume leadership in establishing writing workshops for teachers wishing to improve their own writing skills. 3. The need for increased writing expressed by teachers and students should be given consideration by administrators responsible for determining class size and teaching loads. 4. The responsibility for developing articulation among all teachers assigning writing must be assumed by those responsible for curriculum development.

A STUDY OF SIX METHODS OF TEACHING FORMAL ENGLISH WRITING Order No. 7807915

McNEILL, John Lawrence, Jr., Ph.D. University of South Carolina, 1977. 91pp.

The purpose of the study was to answer the following questions: 1. Which of six methods is most effective in reducing the number of student-made errors in formal English writing? 2. How does pre-writing instruction compare in effectiveness with post-writing instruction? 3. Does a repetition of teaching methods produce greater results? 4. Is there a pattern of errors that students of certain achievement levels make? 5. Do students tend to repeat errors? 6. Which errors are most commonly made?

The experiment was conducted at a community college of 1,500 students. The sample consisted of six classes of freshman English; there were thirty students in each class. The experiment lasted one quarter (eleven weeks).

An analysis of covariance and an analysis of variance showed that there is a significant difference in the effectiveness of teaching methods. The evidence showed that the Personal method was the most effective method in reducing the number of student-made errors in formal English writing. The Personal Method was followed by the Films Method, the Peer Groups Method, the Field Trip Method, the Model Method, and the Opaque Projector Method.

A tabulation showed that there was no significant difference in pre-writing and post-writing instruction as far as reducing the number of student-made errors in formal English writing was concerned.

An analysis of covariance showed that there was a significant difference in errors in formal English writing after repetitions of teaching methods. There was a decrease in average errors for all six methods on Essay #3 as compared to the Initial Essay.

A negative correlation existed between the scores on the College Guidance and Placement tests (Reading and Sentences) and the number of errors in formal English writing; the higher the score on either the Reading Test or the Sentences Test, the fewer the errors in formal English writing; the lower the score on the Reading Test or the Sentences Test, the greater the errors in formal English writing.

A tabulation showed that 175 out of 180 students in the experiment of four essays repeated at least one error in formal English writing. The repetitions of the 175 students decreased, however, with each succeeding essay.

The errors most commonly made by the 180 students were as follows: (1) omission of a comma to separate main clauses joined by a coordinating conjunction, (2) superfluous internal punctuation, and (3) omission of a comma to separate introductory clauses and phrases from a main clause. More errors were made on the three descriptions above than were made on the other sixteen descriptions combined.

The conclusions of the study were as follows: 1. The Personal Method is best of the six methods for reducing the number of student-made errors in formal English writing. Apparently, it makes a difference when the student has direct contact with the instructor. 2. It makes no difference whether students receive instruction before or after writing essays as far as reducing student-made errors in formal English writing is concerned. 3. Repetitions of any one of the six teaching methods in the experiment will cause most students to make fewer errors in formal English writing. 4. Students who score high on the College Guidance and Placement Reading and Sentence Tests generally make fewer errors in formal English writing. Students who score low on the College Guidance and Placement Reading and Sentences Tests generally make more errors in formal English writing. 5. Even though teachers mark errors and use error-free models, most students repeat errors on succeeding essays. 6. The greatest weakness by far of students in formal English writing is the inability to use the comma correctly.

UNMELTED COMPOSITION: A MULTI-CULTURAL APPROACH TO TEACHING ENGLISH COMPOSITION AT THE COLLEGE LEVEL IN AN URBAN SETTING

Order No. 7804625

SALSMAN, Fredrick Leroy, A.D. The University of Michigan, 1977. 156pp. Chairman: Jay Robinson

The purpose of this project is to describe and document a compositional model which unites a philosophy of multi-cultural education to the teaching of English composition at the college level in an urban setting. The model is offered as an alternative to the popular "deficit" and "difference" compositional models that dominate English language and literature curricula in most American colleges and universities.

This ideal course model for teaching English composition will not only complement and support existing ethnic studies programs, but will serve society at large. By integrating through literatures of history, social custom, language and philosophical beliefs of the various highly visible ethnic groups that live in America, this course will help the student to pull into focus his/her own cultural heritage with that of the overall multi-ethnic heritage that is America.

To document this claim, the dissertation focuses on four areas of investigation. Chapter I is a general analysis of the socio-historical forces underlying the emergence of the social movement which changed the monocultural flavor of American education.

Chapter II is a socio-historical analysis of American theories of cultural assimilation and the effects they have had on the American character. Two models of education are reviewed: "deficit" and "difference" models that were developed, and in many cases are still maintained, in an attempt to promote mainstream cultural conformity.

Chapter III examines a specific experiment in multi-cultural education and explores its appropriateness to its particular institution and environment. It goes on to define multi-cultural education and analyzes its implications for American education and society.

Chapter IV justifies the importance of a multi-cultural compositional model at the college level in an urban setting and offers an ideal course package as a replacement for the popular "deficit" and "difference" compositional models.

It is realized that this model is not a panacea for the problems which haunt America's academic curricula and society. It is a step toward understanding. Only through a mutual understanding and knowledge of one another's cultures will the various ethnic groups in this country learn to live with and respect each other as total human beings.

N EXPERIMENTAL STUDY OF SENTENCE-COMBINING AS A MEANS OF INCREASING SYNTACTIC MATURITY AND WRITING QUALITY IN THE COMPOSITIONS OF COLLEGE-AGE STUDENTS ENROLLED IN REMEDIAL ENGLISH CLASSES Order No. 7808144

WATERFALL, Clarence Malan, Ed.D. Utah State University, 1977. 67pp. Major Professor: Dr. William Strong

This study was undertaken to determine the extent sentence-combining exercises--a newly-developed, intensive pedagogical language experience--influenced the syntactic fluency and the writing quality of college-age students enrolled in remedial English classes at Weber State College, Ogden, Utah. The aim of the experiment was to measure the student's ability to grammatically manipulate sentence construction. This ability was demonstrated by the student's skill in reducing independent clauses to subordinate clauses and nonclauses, and in adding them to adjoining clauses and T-units. The student could then construct sentence structures of considerable depth and complexity comparable to those sentences written by mature writers.

The present study tested two assumptions: first, that students trained in sentence-combining procedures would increase the syntactic fluency of their writing. Second, that students trained in sentence-combining procedures would increase their overall writing quality as judged by qualified English teachers.

Four freshman composition teachers cooperated with the experimenter by providing classroom instruction for the experiment. Two teachers instructed the experimental classes using sentence-combining exercises, and two teachers instructed the control classes using traditional methods for remedial English. Thirty-eight students participated in the experiment. Each wrote a 400-word composition (pretest) during the first week of the ten-week quarter and then wrote a 400-word composition (posttest) during the last week of the quarter.

Through the analyses of the pre- and post-compositions of the experimental and control groups, the effects of the language experience were measured. The results of the investigation failed to support one of the study's assumptions. Statistical evidence did not sustain the hypothesis that students trained in sentence-combining procedures wrote compositions significantly different in syntactic fluency from those students trained in traditional methods. However, the other hypothesis was sustained. Students trained in sentence-combining procedures wrote compositions which were judged better overall writing quality than the students of the control group.

One of several specific suggestions for further research was the recommendation that investigations be made to determine whether sentence-combining has a restrictive effect on writing--increasing syntactic fluency and overall writing quality--or whether it can be expected to do the work of an entire writing program.

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